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MARRIAGE IN MEXICO.

How the Engagement and Wedding Ceremonies Are Celebrated.

The Mexican people are hospitable to a fault, always welcoming their friends even though they have not enough to eat themselves. And they religiously visit the sick, including those who have contagious diseases. They are also addicted to public social functions, the invariable mode of entertainment being the dance. They are fond of music, though not proficient in the art of making it, probably more from lack of opportunity than from lack of capacity. The violin and guitar are the usual instruments of music, the repertory of the local musicians being usually limited to a few tunes which are in equal demand for the dance and for the funeral.

One of the most interesting and beautiful of the social functions is the pre-dorio. When a young man wishes to marry he asks for the girl of his choice of the parents, not of the girl herself, and if she is given the pre-dorio at once follows, ushered in by shooting and demonstrations of joy. The bride and bridegroom are publicly presented to their future parents-in-law, after which the company pass in procession in front of the couple, each one dropping a piece of money into the hands of the bride. Then follows the inevitable dance. This public betrothal is considered almost as binding as marriage, and I have heard of but one instance in which the compact was not kept, the recreant bridegroom in that case being visited with ostracism. The betrothal is usually followed by marriage just as soon as the services of the priest can be secured. The marriage ceremony is followed by a feast more notable for the abundance of things to drink than for things to eat and by the usual dance. Indeed the festivities are often prolonged for several nights after the wedding.—Southern Workman.

THE AGE OF STARS.

Color Aids the Astronomer in Making His Calculations.

As a star contracts from the surrounding nebulous matter from which it was thrown off its temperature rises, and with this augmented heat occurs a change both in the star's spectrum and color. Red-hot iron is not nearly so hot as white-hot iron. By observing the various changes in tint which the metal undergoes the foundryman is able to tell with considerable accuracy its degree of heat. A somewhat similar method of gauging a star's temperature, and therefore its age, is relied upon by the astronomer. Color, then, and spectroscopic analysis enable the astronomer to estimate the age of stars that are only beginning to exist as stars and others whose light is fast fading.

After having coagulated, as it were, from a nebulous mass, a star assumes a color that may be best described as an intense bluish white, much like that of the electric arc. Stars of that hue are, therefore, in their infancy. Then comes the white stage, followed by the yellow, orange and red, each succeeding hue indicating greater celestial antiquity than the last. Up to the yellow period the star as it contracts grows hotter and hotter. Then a gradual cooling takes place. Accompanying the changes in color are changes in the spectrum of the star—changes that indicate a modification in physical structure. In the bluish white period of a star's infancy the characteristic wide lines of hydrogen gas predominate in the spectrum. As the color changes, the lines of calcium, magnesium and iron appear, the hydrogen lines gradually becoming thinner and those of calcium broader.—Booklovers Magazine.

An Unusual Seat.

"Pa," said Tommy, opening the paper, "who sits on the seat of war?"

"No one," responded papa, "because the seat of war generally has a tack in it."—Baltimore Herald.

The great question is not so much what money you have in your pocket as what you will buy with it.—Ruskin.